A

SERMON

FOR

GOOD FRIDAY.

ON THE

PASSION OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR,

JESUS CHRIST.

HALIFAX:

PRINTED BY JAMES SPIKE.

1838.

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252.6
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1891

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GOOD FRIDAY.

"*We are become orphans without a father.*"
Jeremiah v. 3.

THE day of mourning has arrived, my Brethren, and we are left without a father. When the thread of life is spent, and the eyes of the tender parent are closed in death, the tears of the afflicted widow, mingle with those of the children, and bathe the lifeless corpse of the deceased—thus it happens when the body of a deceased parent is about to be consigned to its mother earth. But when accidental disease or violence, cuts short the thread of the youthful man's existance, and leaves a widow and helpless infants to bewail his death—then indeed there is cause of affliction, and the loss is not easily repaired—but if spotless in the eyes of God, and blameless in those of men, the father is hurried from his family, accused of crimes which his soul abhorred, convicted by perjury and prosecuted unto death—then who can describe the agony and affliction of the widow, or deleniate the sufferings and anguish of his orphans?

The description of this widow, my Brethren, is but a faint picture of the Church, the spouse of Christ, at the death of her Redeemer and her God—

after a long laps of 1800 years, her grief is still fresh, her mourning* weeds are still displayed, and we her children are still orphans without a father.—Mindful of the loss we have sustained—we assemble before the altar, where we so often were assembled to adore the God of nations, to receive the bread of life—to offer up the sacrifice of a contrite heart—to implore pardon for our sins and blessings for our families. But now where are we to seek for food?—The Tabernacle† is laid open, but our Lord is not there—the lights which surrounded him are extinguished, and his residence is become a dreary waste.

We have, my Brethren, assembled to bewail his death, we are this day orphans without a father, and christians without a sacrifice—each succeeding year brings us to this period—when the misteries of heaven rush upon our minds—when the goodness of God is completed and the wickedness of man is consummated. On this day the decrees of heaven were fulfilled, the sun withdrew its light, all nature was convulsed, and the Son of God was crucified—and what my Brethren, could have been the cause? Was a new world to be created and the old one to be destroyed? No, man, unhappy man, thou wast the cause of this—by thy sins thou wast excluded from eternal bliss—and no alternative remained, but thy eternal perdition, or the death of Christ. Yes, Divine Redeemer, you suffered, that we might regain that inheritance which had been forfeited by sin—you purchased the salvation of man, and paid his ransom in your precious blood. Although created for the enjoyment of heaven, we were estranged from our home, and banish-

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* The Chapels are in mourning on Good Friday in all countries.

† On Good Friday no Mass is said, no candles are lighted, and the Holy Sacrament is removed from the Tabernacle.

ed from the presence of our God—we grovelled in corruption here below. But you, by the sacrifice of the cross, satisfied the divine justice, appeased the wrath of your father, burst open the gates of heaven, passed by Cherubim and Seraphim, and placed man beside the Godhead.

Could I detail the benefits of our redemption—and diffuse through your souls a love of Christ—the recollection of his sufferings, I might pass over—but I am prohibited by the day's sad solemnity, and compelled to return to my theme of woe.

We should melt in sorrow, my Brethren, this day—for the death of our Redeemer—"*for the soul that is not afflicted on this day,*" saith the Lord, "*shall perish from among my people.*" Avert, O God! such [illegible]ence, from this thy Congregation—and enable [illegible] contemplate the passion of our Redeemer, in a [illegible]er [illegible]eable to Thee, and useful to ourselves.—[illegible]hall [illegible]like the Jews, insult you in your suffer[illegible], nor refuse the small tribute of a tear to our dying parent. We shall weep for our Redeemer, for ourselves, and for our children; we shall watch with him in the garden, and suffer stripes with him at the pillar, and shed the last drop of our affections on the unhallowed Mount Calvery. We will bring back to our recollection the multiplicity of our crimes, we will protest at the foot of the cross, and call his blood to witness that we will reform our lives, and endeavour to partake of the fruit of our redemption. We may it is true, again yeild to the frailties of our nature, and our resolutions may be shattered on the rocks of passion, but thou hast told us, O God! by the mouth of thy Prophet Isaias, "that thou knowest our formation," and thou hast declared that, "thou wouldst forgive us even to seventy times seven." Receive then our protestations, and enter not into judgment with thy servants, but on this day let thy blood plead for our forgiveness and salvation.

In attempting to sketch over the life of our Divine Redeemer, and give you a detail of his sufferings and death—and in shewing that we by our sins (as St. Paul expresses it,) again crucify the Son of God—I own I undertake a subject far above my capacity, and one with which it is not safe for man to interfere—but thou who didst not reject the widow's mite, accept our exertions, however insignificant they may be, and enable us to retrace the memory of the passion of our Divine Redeemer, in a manner suitable to the subject, and calculated to promote the spiritual interests of this Congregation.

You are already, my Brethren, acquainted with the original sin of Adam, and with the punishment which Almighty God, on that occasion thought proper to inflict by an eternal and irrevocable decree.—You are also aware that in consequence of the fall, it was resolved in heaven, that the second person of the adorable Trinity should become man, that is, that he should unite with the divinity a human body and soul; and that this union of the human nature with the divine in the person of Jesus Christ, should suffer death upon a cross in order to appease the wrath of God, and satisfy his justice, and open heaven for the human race; this was the design of the incarnation as we see in holy writ—and although we have here the groundwork of our redemption, the other names which the incarnate God vouchsafed to make use of in order to accomplish this grand design, though not more sublime in their nature, are more calculated to call forth our sympathy and gratitude. Having come forward to discharge a debt that was common to all the posterity of Adam, he took his rank not among the Emperors and Kings, not among the Heroes or Sages of his day—but descended to the cottage of an holy virgin, and an humble artisan in the obscurity of a country village—he lay hidden for 30 years, and scarce suffered a

ray of light to penetrate that veil which encompassed his divinity—the labour of his hands was his support, cold and hunger were his attendants, poverty and distress his constant companions—he bore, in its fullest extent, the punishment inflicted on Adam, "*in the labour of thy hands, and in the sweat of thy brow, shalt thou eat thy bread, until you return to that earth from which thou hast been taken.*"

Forced by the importunities of his parent, he at length declares his power—laying aside the garb of man he assumes that of a God—the elements once more tremble at his will, and obey his command, and water is converted into wine. Having thus opened as it were the commission of his father, he proceeds to the reformation of mankind. Superstition and idolatry had now o'erspread the earth—the sun, the moon, the stars, had become objects of adoration—every man who had acquired fame by the enormity of his crimes, or woman by the multiplicity of her vices, had acquired a place in the catalogue of the gods—the very beasts and reptiles of the earth, from the Elephant to the Asp, had been worshipped as deities, and when all the productions of nature were exhausted, men erected altars and offered sacrifices to the gods still unknown.

Such was the perversity of man, that though the eye can scarcely be raised to the firmament, or the hand stretched forth to the creation, without recognising the works of the omnipotent—yet the true God would not be known, nor his power acknowledged, from the rising to the setting sun, all morality was perverted. The name of virtue existed, but the reality had disappeared—the shadow might still dazzel, but the substance was no more—vice prevailed with individuals, and swayed the multitude, it dictated in the family and governed the senate. The savage followed his unbridled passions, the civilized man unchecked by

the voice of reason, rewarded infamy, legalized thefts, and permitted murder—such was the aspect which the world wore, when the Messiah appeared. Even the Jews to whom the oracles of heaven were confided, were sectaries in opinion, and Gentiles in practice. The chair of Moses indeed had survived the wreck of religion, but the priest who filled it possessed not the piety of Levi, nor the sanctity of Aaron—the Samaritans had been for ages separated from the unity of the Jewish Church, and the remaining stock though seemingly united, contended in opinion. There was the pride of the Scribes, the mistaken zeal of the Pharisees, the enthusiasm and errors of the Sadducees—these were the supporters of the Synagogue, the pillars of the Temple of Solomon—and the last stay of religion on earth. How then is this mass of error to be removed, this darkness to be dissipated, and light restored? All the perversity of the heart of man, and all the bad passions of his nature, had spent 4000 years in arriving at this summit of depravity—the work of corruption was now completed, and its foundation as broad as the surface of the globe. The humble Jesus now appears, and he who as Isaiah tells us, "would not break the smitten reed," he will tumble down this edifice, and establish religion on its ruins. Oh yes! my dear Brethren, but at what a price? why at the price of his blood, and the sacrifice of his life. The time assigned for the reformation of mankind was but short, and the mission of Christ was concluded in the space of three years—during this time he taught mankind a code of morality, which far surpasses the theories of man, and could only be the production of a God—the thunder does not speak louder than does the sanctity and heavenly origin of this divine precept—"*love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who calumniate and persecute you*"—all mankind had hitherto agreed, that

the perfection of morality consisted in the rule: "*do to others as you would be done by*"—but this was far behind the doctrine of Jesus, which surpassed it as much as the sun does the lesser planets—he said return good for evil, love for hate, prayers for calumnies and persecutions. Having thus perfected the human will, and infused into it as it were a tincture of the divinity, he next applies himself to the understanding which had long abandoned the dictates of reason, and gone wild in the ways of error—he found that it should be humbled, convinced of its own weakness, brought back to a sense of its own insignificancy, and confined to a proper sphere; on this account, he disclosed certain truths, which are incomprehensible, unintelligible to the human mind, to which the eye of reason cannot reach, and to which the pride of the philosopher must bow. These are the mysteries of religion placed as boundaries to our reason, and landmarks to our faith—they keep us continually in mind of the inscrutable nature of the deity, the workings of human nature, the necessity of obedience; whilst on the other hand they serve as bonds to connect the society of christians, and are justly said by an eminent statesman and philosopher of France, to be of the same necessity and effect in religion, as the courts of Judicature are in law, for they are the rule which guides, the standard which regulates, the tribunal which pronounces in the great cause of our salvation.

Such my Brethren, are the two prominent features of this religion, which descended from heaven—charity regulates the will, and faith the understanding. In vain would our Redeemer, publish this doctrine to the world, stamped as it was with the broad seal of the divinity, if he had not enforced its truth and necessity by miracles, such as the power of the omnipotent alone could perform—he made the lame

to walk, the blind to see, the dead he raised to life, he fed thousands with a handful of bread—the laws of nature bowed to his authority, the elements obeyed his will and changed their course at his command, the storm ceased when he spoke, and the sea became solid when he moved on its surface—and as if the miracles which could be wrought on earth, were insufficient, he displayed the glories of Heaven on Mount Thabor. These miracles my dear Christian Brethren, are the sanction of your religion—these wonders are the bulworks of your faith.

He choose twelve disciples, the depositories of his doctrine, and the testimonies of his works—and in their company he prepares to cancel the debt of Adam, to fulfil the decrees of his father, to seal our Religion and his Testament by the sacrifice of the cross—and the effusion of his precious blood. With desire, Divine Redeemer, didst thou long to eat the Paschal lamb with thy disciples—and this desire is now fulfilled—that lamb which was the type of thy sufferings and innocence, is now to be eaten for the last time—the figure is to give way to the reality, and the shadow must be dissipated by the substance. The sacrifices of Abraham, of Moses, and of Isaac, to that prefigured by Melchisedec, and fortold by Malachi, the Jewish compact, had been fulfiled—its rules, its ceremonies, its sacrifices, must cease—and a new and clean oblation substituted in their stead. Blood, that symbol of fear, was not fit for the new law, which produces salvation by love and charity, and if others declared it impossible that the blood of goats or oxen could take away the guilt of men, you did institute a sacrifice more worthy of your goodness, and more salutary to your followers—you are to give us the bread of life, of which he who eats shall live for ever—this is what you prepared to do with your disciples.

Having fulfiled the law of Moses, by partaking of the Paschal lamb, he took bread in his hands, and having blessed it, he broke and gave it to his disciples, saying: "*this is my body*," and in like manner the chalice, saying: "*this is my blood*," and so instituted the eucharist, which was to be the sacrifice of the new law—the bond of charity and union between christians—and the food of their souls. I feel a difficulty in thus passing over this heavenly institution, this celestial gift, whereby we are united to the divinity, and as St. Cyril emphatically says, "made one flesh and one blood with Christ"—this is what made the royal Prophet exclaim: there is no nation so great as ours—which would have its gods approach as our God does to us. Let us sum it up with his great mercies and hasten to the scene of affliction.

He had foretold his passion to his disciples and warned them of his approaching end—he had now fulfilled all his promises to them, instituted a sacrifice which was to continue to the end of the world—and had already sealed the testament which he left them by the mystic effusion of his blood in the last supper—he had not treated them as servants, but as friends—nay more my Brethren, he had been their servant, for he washed their feet, and reclined on the bosom of one, like an infant on that of his father—but this afflicting scene of love, which even the treachery of Judas could not interrupt—should now conclude.

Having now closed their heavenly banquit, they sojourn into a garden—and here commences the history of his passion, and of those sufferings, which according to St. Peter, the eternal decrees of the deity had defined he should endure. He proceeds to the Mountain of Olives—where the shade of that gloomy tree—backed by the shadow of the passing cloud—seemed to presage the mourning of his death, an awful silence reigns throughout, and the suspending

elements hang watchful of the fate of their creator—nature is arrested in its course, while Jacob's sons were watchful in their counsils and Christ prepares for death. He quits the Garden of Olives and advances to that of Gethsemani—here he leaves his disciples at a distance and proceeds to pray: "*O Father, if it be possible, remove from me this chalice, but not my will, but thine be done.*" It is now he laid aside all the power of the deity, and assumed all the weakness of man—the dissertion of his friends, the denial of his apostle, the affliction of his mother, the torments of the cross, and the blasphemies of his persecutors, are all presented to his view. The base ingratitude of man weighs him down, he falls into an agony, my Brethren, and overcome with affliction, his blood gushes from every pore, his body is bathed in a sweat of blood, he anticipates all the torments of the cross, and impatient to redeem us, he is lavish of his blood, and heedless of his own preservation—would spare the bloody task of his execution, but that an angel descended from heaven to administer relief, he is comforted in his afflictions, and returns to his apostles—weak mortals, oppressed and weary, they were now asleep—he awakes them from their slumber, with a mild rebuke—"could you not," says he "watch a single hour with me—watch and pray lest you enter into temptation—for the spirit is quick, but the flesh is frail."

He returns again and perseveres in his appeals to heaven, at length he triumphs over his agony, he calmly contemplates on the stages of his passion, and looks tranquilly at his approaching death—he reflects on the universe which he had erected, and sees how its perfection requires the sacrifice of his life—he looks to the will of his eternal father, and sees his passion decreed in the annals of eternity—he looks to mankind whom he had in part reformed and in-

structed, and sees that a delay of his sufferings would replunge them in that sink of iniquity, from which they were about to emerge. He looks to the infant establishment of his Church, which, like a tender plant might be shook by the first blast of persecution, but if cherished by his suffering, and rooted in his passion, would become strong and immoveable, and its branches o'erspread the earth. He then views with composure his approaching dissolution, and feels a rich compensation for every sacrifice, in the happiness of man. He returns to his disciples and again finds them sleeping, but his visage is not flushed with indignation, sensible of their weakness, and that in himself alone he could seek for strength, he says: "sleep now and rest, for behold the hour is come, the son of man shall be given up into the hands of sinners. Yes, my Brethren, he tells them to sleep and rest, that their watching is useless, and their labour was vain, that all preliminaries were now settled, and the compact should be sealed—they had remained with him in his temptations, and their company was some consolation, but now he should act alone, the hour had come, and the powers of darkness had prevailed—Judas the traitor, was approaching, to consummate his malice, and sell the Son of God. Oh Judas! unhappy man! did you raise your eyes to heaven, whilst you sought him out in his retreat—did not gratitude for his affection raise a barrier against your footsteps? Did not the fear of his vengeance and power wax cold your blood and freeze it in your veins? Did not the torch which shot its glimmering blaze through the surrounding darkness affright you? Did not the din of arms which followed your treacherous steps fill your mind with horror, and avert you from your purpose? Oh no! your callous heart is steeled, and you complete your treason by a kiss, and thus you betray the son of man.

Here, my Brethren, it was necessary that our Lord should testify his power by a miracle, and his obedience by submission. Having rebuked the apostate Judas, he stands with majesty and shews to his very persecutors that it was his will and not their power, could conduct him to execution. Impelled by an imperceptible but irresistible force, they are stopped whilst they approach him and thrown back from his presence, he heals a wound that was inflicted by one of his followers, and having thus for the last time before his death confirmed his followers and confounded his enemies—he submits to their furious insults, and bowed like a culprit. The Son of God is conducted to a tribunal where justice is suppressed, where bigotry indicts, purjury prevails, and hypocricy pronounces sentence. Alas! they are not the insults of a rabble which could cause him pain, but the desertion of his friends. He had from the commencement inculcated humility as the foundation of every virtue to his disciples, he forewarned them of his passion, and prepared them for the scandal of his humiliations. He impressed upon them the certainty of his resurrection, limited the period of their suspense not by years, or months, or weeks, but by an interval of three days—still they were weak, and having abandoned him, says the evangelist, they fled—but like the child, who, fearing to follow his mother when desired to remain at home, yet passes the threshold and pursues her with an anxious eye till she disappears from his sight—so the apostles whose courage was frozen, but whose affections were still warm, withheld by fear, and impelled by love, they followed him, but at a distance. He is conducted to the hall of the high priest, like a nightly marauder to a watch-house, and loaded with every vile reproach, he spends this woful night with a band of ruffians, they strike him upon the head and spit upon his face, saying: "prophecy who struck thee," but this might be borne if the treason

of a friend had not been added to the insults of an enemy. "If an enemy had persecuted me," said the Royal Prophet, "I could have borne it, but a friend who had taken with me sweet and wholesome food." It was thus with our Redeemer, he might suffer the bludgeon of a bailiff, or the blasphemy of a Roman soldier, but the denial of Peter which he witnessed, must have rent his very soul. This man whom he had chosen, whom he had assimilated to God, and vested with powers refused to angels, whom he had saved from the fangs of satan, and confirmed with the good graces of his father—to behold him now the victim of his own weakness, the deserter of his master, the apostate of his faith—this blow, my Brethren, was more acute and more insupportable than the nailing to the cross.

Could I here desert my theme and assail the perfidy of Christians, who by their sins continually deny their God—I could draw a parallel, not between them and Peter who repents by a single look, but between them and Judas, whom the joys of heaven, nor the terrors of hell, could not deter from his sinful purpose. But now the council of the Jewish Priests and Elders has assembled, and Christ is arraigned at their bar—the malice of man hitherto was confined to the treachery of an individual, or to the blind enthusiasm of a mob, but now it is clad in the robes of justice, it is protected by the forms of law, it is supported by power and commits murder in the name of God. Yes, my Brethren, the High Priest of the Jews, the successor of Aaron, surrounded by his doctors and elders, takes his seat and calls before him—Oh! whom does he call? Is it a murderer, or an assassin—is it an imposter who would destroy religion, disturb the order of society, and introduce anarchy into the church or state? Or is it the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, who delivered his forefathers from the cruel yoke of the Egyptians, and who fed them in the desert with the food of angels, be-

fore whose will the hostile bands of Canaan were scattered like chaff before the wind, who freed them from the yoke of Babylon—or is it that God, who, whilst the darkness of idolatry o'erspread the world caused the light of true religion to shine among them—is this the criminal whom you summon to your tribunal? "Tell us, said they, art thou the Christ?" Perverse generation! he has told you repeatedly that he was, and that you should have no cause of doubt, there was no proof that man could devise, that he did not make use of, to convince you. But in vain, pride and hypocricy had taken possession of your souls, avarice and self-interest shut out conviction—you are determined to condemn—when your bribed perjury had failed to convict him, abandoned your tribunals and became accusers at the feet of a heathen Pilate—who though nurtured in slaughter and the minion of a tyrant, yet he hesitated to pronounce death, when no guilt could be proved. He endeavours to temporize, and too just to commit murder, he fears to do justice—but the unhappy Jews, arouse his fears and allay his scruples, "if you do not condemn him," said they, "you are not a friend to Cæsar, and if you think him innocent, let his blood be upon us, and upon our children."

Oh! unhappy men! your prayer was heard by Pilate, and retribution was sent you from above—your country became waste, your children were devoured by their own parents, and the remnant of your race persecuted upon earth, are now without a country and without a home. Our Redeemer was hurried away notwithstanding his innocence, and given over to the horrid persecution of a brutal soldiery. The malicious Jews are as fertile in devising modes of persecution, as they are barbarous in their execution—they lay by every sense of shame, and approach with tumultuous barbarity the incarnate God—they strip him of his garments, bind him to a pillar, and as if a single executioner were

not sufficient, they employ a whole company of soldiers to lash, to lacerate the flesh of their Messiah. Oh! my God! who can contemplate thy suffering—who can view that Jesus, mild and patient yet writhing under pain—his tender flesh torn by a scorpion lash, and that body on which angels desired to look is tortured by those very people for whose redemption it was torn.—Too cruel to consummate at once their wickedness, they spare so much of life as would prolong his sufferings without respiting his pain. The Prophet had long fortold "that from the soal of his foot to the top of his head, there would be no health in him,"—and they fulfil the melancholy prediction by fixing a crown of thorns on his head, so hard as to penetrate skin and flesh and make a fixture in the bone—they press it round his temples, and the paleness of an exhausted visage is changed for the crimson hue of blood. That face which once on Mount Thabor exceeded the brilliancy of the sun, is now disfigured with anguish, and covered with clotted gore. The day had arrived which was to fix an epoch in the annals of Heaven, and in the history of time, the day when the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled.—Clothed with the mock insignia of a king, the victim is now led forth, no balm to heal his wounds, no sleep to refresh his weary limbs, no grateful friend to sooth him with a ray of hope, or soften down the anguish of dispair.

Pilate having failed in his feeble efforts to preserve his life, dismissed Barrabas from prison, and gave Jesus over to be crucified. The malefactor Barrabas had long been accustomed to rob the industrious and murder the innocent—Jesus accustomed to relieve the distressed and console the afflicted. Barrabas had spent his life in the perpetration of wickedness—Jesus in teaching virtue and doing good to all mankind. The one was a robber, a murderer—the other the Messiah. Yet, in the competition, O Lord, you were

doomed to the cross, and Barrabas set free—they cried out "dismiss the murderer, and put the innocent to death, let his blood be upon us and our children."—They hurry him away, the dismal procession now proceeds—and Jerusalem! unhappy Jerusalem! you now witness the period of your greatness—you now cancel your name from the list of cities—you now fill up the vial of wrath—you now close your series of crimes, and for the last time you imbrue your hands in the blood of your benefactor, who came to redeem, to save you. He wished to gather your children under his wings, and to pardon you the persecution of his servants—but no, your heart was too callous, the measure of your iniquities is full, and you exult in sealing your own condemnation in that sacred blood that was intended for your redemption. Your streets are crouded to view the culpret as he passes, old age and infirmity are forgotten, and all rush to encourage by their presence the deluded rabble, who escort the criminal to the place of execution.

Oh! children of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, is it thus you treat your long wished for Messiah? Has gratitude, has compassion abandoned you? Do you not see a ray of the divinity beam from the visage of your victim whilst he advances laden with his cross? Cannot that glance which converted Peter excite compunction in your souls? Will not that blood which trickles from his temples, that gore which marks his footsteps excite compassion, or call forth the tear of sympathy or commiseration? Can you view the helmit of a Roman soldier or those swords which enslaved your country, guarding this victim from your insults, and not reflect that the weeks of Daniel are ended—that the prophecy of Jacob is fulfilled—and that your Messiah, your deliverer, your hope, and your salvation passes by? Almost a million who inhabited your city of whom only a few women were found to commiserate his sufferings and

mingle tears with his blood. A solitary widow offered him relief by giving him a handkerchief to wipe off the blood that obscured his sight—but behold his unbounded charity—forgetful of his suffering he embraced this opportunity of exhorting them all to repentance, and warning them of their approaching fate, "weep," says he, "not for me but for yourselves and for your children, for the time approaches when you will call upon the mountains to fall upon you, and the hills to cover you." As if he would say my sufferings are almost over, but yours are soon to begin—your city once the favorite of heaven shall be destroyed, your empire overturned, war, pestilence, and famine, shall complete the degradation of your country. The remnant of your race shall be sold as slaves to the Gentiles, and live detested by all nations—your land "which flowed with milk and honey," shall be laid waste, your cities shall be levelled to the ground, a stone of the great Jerusalem shall not be left on another—your temple shall be consumed by fire, no sacrifice shall ever more be offered on its altars, and no priesthood shall exist among you to appease the wrath of God. These are the evils you should lament, and not my sufferings which will shortly end.

Exhausted from a loss of blood, and unable to proceed, he falls down almost lifeless under the weight of the cross. Unmoved by pity, inaccessible to remorse, they would force him to resume his load—but the morning had advanced and persecution admits of no delay—they employ a countryman to carry the fallen load, whilst Jesus is conducted as described by Isaiah, "like a sheep to the slaughter, and opened not his mouth." They arrive at Mount Calvary, and now the work of death commences—an enormous cross is extended on the earth, nails and hammers are prepared, the ropes are adjusted, and the victim is produced. O! good God! could they not end your sufferings with a single blow? Was it necessary that all

the torments which barbarism had invented, and persecution devised, and which malice had ever executed, should be heaped upon you? Must the scene at the pillar be renewed, and your green wounds bleed afresh? Must you be exposed to the winds, and elevated to the scorching sun? Must the garment which is now inserted in your flesh, be torn like a blister from the wounds? Must that body which was mangled with the lash, be purpled again with your gore? Yes! the clothes are dragged with violence from his body—the prophet Isaiah thus describes his appearance, "there is not in him beauty nor comeliness, we have seen him and could not know him, we have looked upon him as covered with a leprosy, and stricken by God and humbled."

He is stretched upon the cross, my Brethren, almost lifeless—his joints are dislocated by barbarian cruelty, and his hands and feet are nailed to the wood, the cross is placed erect, and is raised from the earth—Behold Him now! my Brethren, suspended!! Behold Him! Behold the image of your God—of your Redeemer—whom you have crucified by your sins!! Yes, here you see his image, but on Calvary you could have seen the author of life, struggling with the pangs of death, and exhausted by the weight of your sins. His strength is at length exhausted, and a lingering death is about to close this awful catastrophe; yet he is not suffered to depart in peace, he is still upbraided as an imposter—they tell him who had saved others, to preserve himself—"if he be the Son of God," said they, "let him descend from the cross, and we shall believe him." Unhappy generation! if you be sincere in your profession, you shall not want testimony of what he is—your temple shall announce it, the sun shall proclaim it, the earth shall testify it, but you have not yet concluded, the prophecy must be fulfilled, "for my food they gave gall," says the Pro-

phet, " and with vinegar they drenched me in my thirst."

Yes, my Brethren, when the rays of a burning sun had pressed his scars and penetrated to his bones; when the blood no longer circulated through his mangled veins, and his tongue no longer could utter a sound; when the soul was bursting from restraint, and the spark of life just extinguished—then a spunge was presented to allay his thirst, but filled with vinegar and gall. The scene is now closing, he dispenses pardon to the penetent thief, he commended his disciple to his mother, and his mother to his beloved disciple—he raises his voice once more to heaven and prays for his persecutors, saying: " Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Then inclining his head, he gives up the Ghost—He dies! He expires!!

Until then all nature continued in suspense and trembled for its Creator, but could not interpose; but now, as if fearing for its own existence, it revolts, and as far as the creation extended, mourned far its Lord. The sea moves in agitation, and the earth is convulsed to its centre—the sun withholds its light from the eyes of man, and will not be a witness to their crimes, a darkness overspreads the surface of the globe, and a Gentile exclaims: " the God of nature suffers, or the universal system is dissolved." The prisons of the dead are no longer closed, the bodies walk abroad—the Jews are rejected, their laws annulled, their temple is no longer consecrated, for its veil is rent asunder; their ministry is cancelled, and their sacrifices are rejected—and all is finished.

Thus, my Brethren, the life of our Divine Redeemer ended. A life devoted to the redemption and reformation of mankind, who in return crucified the author of all good. Indeed when we reflect that during his mission, he was wholly occupied in instructing the ignorant, in relieving the distressed, in restoring

light to the blind, health to the sick, and confirming his doctrine, not by the high sounding words of human wisdom, but by miracles, such as were never witnessed before—we are astonished that the Jews, who were until then God's own people, could condemn to so ignominious a death their Lord and their Messiah. But my Brethren, they had some excuse to plead, those Doctors and Priests, to whom they had been long accustomed to look, as the oracles of truth, had been foremost in the unjust persecution. The people were led by them, and the Son of God pleaded for them on the cross, saying: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do,"—"and if they did," St. Peter tells us, "they never would have crucified the Lord of Glory." Yet their ignorance being culpable, they were not excused—God's anger was exasperated against them, the vial of his wrath was poured out upon them, their country was laid waste, a remnant alone of them was spared, to fill up the views of providence, who were dispersed about the earth, to bear testimony to the crimes of their forefathers, and the immutable justice of an avenging God.

But, my Brethren, are we to consider this treason of the Jews, and their punishment, as an historical fact, which concerns not the present assembly—or will we not rather consider it as a precedent by which we ourselves may be one day judged? St. Paul assures us, that, "the Christian who violates the laws of God, Crucifies again to himself the Son of God." By our sins, my Brethren, we assault him in the garden, we buffet him at the pillar, we nail him to the cross—nay, what is more, we do this while we confess that he is the Son of God. We cry to him, Lord! Lord! and then we strike a nail into his hand; we cry, "Save us O Lord! or we perish," and then tell the world we know not the man.

Yes, my Brethren, I say you deny him—you confess him indeed by your lips, but deny him by your works—long since has the Prophet complained of you, saying: "this people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me." If the punishment of the ignorant Jews, has been singular as it was severe, burried in infidelity, the object of detestation to men, the victim of God's wrath—what will become of the Christian, who, whilst he calls upon his Redeemer. thrusts a lance into his side—no language can depict his danger.

Yet, my Brethren, you cannot be convinced that when you sin, your guilt is equal to that of the Jews, you do not see your Lord thirsting or falling under a cross, you do not see his blood gushing from his pores, or streaming from his temples—you do not strike nails into his hands or feet, the victim on the cross does not flash upon your eye, nor the shrieks of his mother strike upon your ear. No! your senses are not affected by what you do, you can say I do not inflict punishment with my hands—the Jews can reply, I thought I crucified an impostor—his excues is vain, and so is yours.

But, my Brethren, I shall drop my argument and recur to that of St. Paul, by whose mouth the Holy Ghost assures us, "that by our sins we crucify again the Son of God,"—will you believe this apostle, my Brethren, and the Jews who did not repent were annihilated by an angry God—so will the Christian who violates his laws be punished by torments that will never end. These are not the traditions of men, nor the reasonings of the wise, they are transcripts from the records of the Deity, and the laws upon which your fate depends. They have their source in the origin of human nature, and are the necessary consequences of the truths of revelation.

Yes, my Brethren, if we do not observe the laws of God, we will perish—if we do not repent of our sins,

we must inevitably suffer—if we do not reform our lives, there awaits us a terrible expectation of judgment. And let me now address you in the words of my Redeemer, "weep not for him who is now the fountain of celestial bliss, but weep for yourselves and for your children"—let that grief which is excited by the recollection of the sufferings of Christ, be turned inwards and cleanse your hearts from the affection to sin, let the gloom which pervades the christian world, and the Mourning which clothes our Altars, remind you of the depth of your ingratitude, and the necessity of bewailing your offences, in the bitterness of your soul—let the crime of the Jews and the certainty of their punishment imprint on your minds the malice of sin, and the inevitability of punishment. But above all my Brethren, strive to make a return for the love and goodness of that God who laid down his life for the redemption of your souls, let your wickedness be ended, and a new era commenced in your lives. If you have hitherto imitated the perverseness of the Jews, and lent your hand to the execution of your Lord—look now, to the mercy of your Redeemer, who looks down with an eye of complacency upon those who repent for their sins. He lives to interceed for us, and on this day we cannot cry to him in vain. Surely he recollects the anniversary of his suffering—and if on Calvary he could pray for his executioners, he will be merciful to us who acknowledge our weakness and sue for pardon.

May that merciful Jesus, who this day suffered for us, grant us all, my dear Christian Brethren, a remission of all our sins, and a perseverance in good, till we rise with him to a life of never-ending glory.—A Blessing I sincerely wish you all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—AMEN.